

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EUR/NE: CWSCHALLER
APPROVED BY EUR/NE: RLFUNSETH
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TO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 191922

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, US, UK, EI

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT ON NORTHERN
IRELAND

1. EUR/NE DIRECTOR FUNSETH CALLED IN IRISH CHARGE DEMPSEY
AUGUST 12 AND GAVE HIM COPY OF DRAFT STATEMENT (SENT
SEPTEL) DEPARTMENT HAS SENT TO WHITE HOUSE FOR POSSIBLE
ISSUANCE BY THE PRESIDENT. DEMPSEY ACCOMPANIED BY FIRST
SECRETARY SMYTH.

2. FUNSETH NOTED THAT TEXT RESULT OF HIGH-LEVEL DEPARTMENT
CONSIDERATION, AND EFFORT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT VIEWS OF
IRISH, BRITISH AND CONGRESSIONAL FIGURES. WE HOPED STATE-
MENT WOULD BE ISSUED BETWEEN AUGUST 16 AND LABOR DAY.
IRISH SUGGESTIONS HAD BEEN ACCEPTED E;PLICITLY OR IN GEN-
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ERAL TERMS WITH ONE EXCEPTION. WE FELT THAT ADDING "AND
OF IRELAND GENERALLY" AT END OF PARAGRAPH SIX WOULD DILUTE
"INDUCEMENT" TO NORTHERN PROTESTANTS BY PLACING IT IN AN
ALL-IRELAND CONTEXT.

3. DEMPSEY SAID IRISH THINKING WAS THAT BENEFIT WOULD BE
GENERAL, AND PREFERABLY SHOULD BE SPECIFIED; THE IMPORTANT

THING, HOWEVER, WAS THAT THERE WOULD BE GENERAL BENEFIT. HE DID NOT THINK DUBLIN WOULD BE GREATLY CONCERNED BY

BY OMISSION OF THE PHRASE. THE IRISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, BY OMISSION OF A PHRASE IN THE SECOND PARAGRAPH THAT A SOLUTION SHOULD BE "ACCEPTABLE TO THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS." THE UK HAD INVITED THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 1973 SUNNINGDALE CONFERENCE AND SO RECOGNIZED ITS LEGITIMATE INTEREST IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THIS WENT MUCH FURTHER THAN THE "ACCEPTABLE" PHRASE WOULD GO. DUBLIN WOULD BE PUZZLED BY THE OMISSION AND WOULD WANT TO KNOW THE REASONS. DEMPSEY ASKED WHO IN THE US GOVERNMENT WAS OPPOSED TO ACCEPTING THE IRISH LANGUAGE THAT A SOLUTION WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH THE IRISH AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS.

4. FUNSETH SAID WE TRIED TO MEET IRISH CONCERNS BY OUR REFERENCE IN PARAGRAPH TWO TO THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS. WE HAD TAKEN SERIOUS ACCOUNT OF ALL VIEWS, BUT COULD NOT GO INTO THE REASONS WHY EACH PORTION OF THE DRAFT WAS AS IT WAS. THE STATEMENT REFLECTS WHAT THE US IS SAYING ABOUT THE ISSUE; IT DOES NOT PURPORT TO SPEAK FOR THE BRITISH OR IRISH GOVERNMENTS.-- OR TO BIND THEM. WE ARE MAKING WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE A HELPFUL STATEMENT, NOT A BLUEPRINT FOR A SETTLEMENT.

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5. DEMPSEY SAID HE FEARED OUR PHRASE IN PARAGRAPH TWO DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH. SUPPORTERS OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA ARE SET TO CLAIM INSPIRATION FOR THE STATEMENT AND THE IRISH FORMULATION WOULD CLEARLY DISPROVE THEM. SMYTH SAID THE STATEMENT SHOULD BE AN INDUCEMENT TO A SENSIBLE SOLUTION -- NOT ONE OF FANTASY; UNLESS A SOLUTION IS DEFINED AS ACCEPTABLE TO THE TWO SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS ON THE ISLAND, IT COULD THEORETICALLY MEAN A PARAMILITARY SOLUTION.

6. FUNSETH SAID THE WHOLE TONE AND TEXT OF THE STATEMENT WAS A REJECTION OF A PARAMILITARY SOLUTION. IF THERE WAS ANY QUESTION OF PARAMILITARY CLAIMS TO INSPIRING THE STATEMENT, WE WILL DEAL WITH THEM QUICKLY AND FORCEFULLY. IN ADDITION, IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT INSPIRATION COMES FROM CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS WHO OPPOSE VIOLENCE AND HAVE BEEN VILIFIED BY PARAMILITARIES.

7. SMYTH ASKED HOW THE STATEMENT WOULD BE HANDLED BY THE WHITE HOUSE. INFORMED THAT WE HAVE NOT YET ADDRESSED THAT, HE SAID THE IMPACT WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED IF THE PRESIDENT DID NOT HIMSELF PERSONALLY ISSUE IT AND READ

IT BEFORE THE NEWSMEDIA INCLUDING TV. MERELY RELEASING
IT TO THE PRESS WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY DEPRECIATE ITS VALUE,

PARTICULARLY SINCE THERE HAS BEEN SO MUCH PREVIOUS PRESS
SPECULATION.

8. FUNSETH SAID WE BELIEVE IT IS A POSITIVE AND
CONSTRUCTIVE STATEMENT AND WE HOPE IT WILL BE HELPFUL HERE
AND IN IRELAND. FUNSETH STRESSED THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF
THE STATEMENT AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO ITS APPROVAL BY
THE PRESIDENT AND ITS ISSUANCE AND SAID ANOTHER ROUND OF
PRESS SPECULATION WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL.

9. DEMPSEY SAID THE STATEMENT IN GENERAL WAS EXCELLENT
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AND HE WOULD SEND IT IMMEDIATELY TO DUBLIN. HE REITERATED
CONCERN ABOUT OMISSION OF THE "ACCEPTABLE" PHRASE AND
WOULD NOT EXCLUDE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT MIGHT PURSUE THE
MATTER FURTHER. CHRISTOPHER

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